

ECA Update: September 22, 2015



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Cochran Releases Short-Term Bill to Fund Government Through December 11

Senate Appropriations Committee

Senate moves to prevent shutdown

The Hill

Senate Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran (R-MS) introduced a short-term bill to fund the government through December 11. The resolution, a section-by-section analysis, and a one-page summary can all be accessed [here](#).

Cochran Releases Short-Term Bill to Fund Government Through December 11

September 22, 2015

[Appropriations Press Release](#)

Measure Addresses Defense Needs, Provides Emergency Wildfire Suppression Funds, Prohibits Funding for Planned Parenthood

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) today encouraged Senators to support a short-term continuing resolution to continue funding for government operations and prohibit funding for Planned Parenthood.

The Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2016 will ensure the operation of the federal government through Dec. 11, 2015, creating a two-and-a-half month window to complete the fiscal year 2016 appropriations process. The legislation provides funding at an annual rate of \$1.017 trillion, which conforms to the topline discretionary spending limit established by the Budget Control Act for fiscal year 2016.

“Our committee has approved all 12 of the annual appropriations bills required to meet our national security and domestic priorities. Most of these bills have bipartisan support,” Cochran

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said. “I encourage Senators to support this continuing resolution so that we can meet our responsibility to the American people to keep government operations open and address the challenges facing our nation.”

For the duration of the continuing resolution, the legislation will provide appropriations for Overseas Contingency Operations at an annual rate of \$74.7 billion. The legislation also includes \$700 million in emergency wildland fire suppression funding.

In response to the release of disturbing videotapes regarding fetal tissue sales, the legislation places a one-year prohibition on federal funding for Planned Parenthood or its affiliates unless such entities certify they will not perform or fund abortions. The bill redirects the estimated \$235 million in mandatory savings to increase funding for community health centers.

To address unique circumstances arising during the duration of the continuing resolution, the measure includes a limited number of funding anomalies, such as: supporting veterans’ disability claims processing at a rate necessary to address ongoing backlogs; paying ongoing rental assistance contracts for rural housing; and accommodating an increased demand for 7(a) small business loans.

Finally, the legislation extends certain expiring authorities for the duration of the continuing resolution. For example, authorities are extended for the Internet Tax Freedom Act, the E-Verify program, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Senate moves to prevent shutdown

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[LINK](#)

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) announced Tuesday the Senate will vote to redirect Planned Parenthood funding to community health centers and fund the government until Dec. 11.

The action sets up a Thursday vote, the same day Pope Francis speaks to a historic joint session of Congress.

Democrats will filibuster the stopgap funding measure because of the Planned Parenthood rider, setting up votes on a so-called “clean” continuing resolution next week.

That may require lawmakers to work over the weekend if Tea Party favorites such as Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) throw up procedural objections to a stopgap that allows Planned Parenthood to receive funding.

McConnell made no mention of moving a stopgap stripped of the policy rider when Democrats block it, though that step is widely expected.

Instead, he focused his comments on blocking funding for Planned Parenthood, even though he has repeatedly criticized the strategy of risking a government shutdown over the issue.

“For one year, it would defund Planned Parenthood and protect women’s health by funding community health clinics with that \$235 million instead,” McConnell said in a floor statement. “This would allow us to press the ‘pause’ button as we investigate the serious scandal surrounding Planned Parenthood.”

The resolution, introduced by Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), would fund the government until Dec. 11, giving congressional leaders time to negotiate a year-end budget deal with President Obama.

It cuts off funding to Planned Parenthood for one year unless the group certifies that its clinics will not perform or fund abortions. Instead, the bill would redirect \$235 million in mandatory savings to increase funding to community health centers.

Earlier this month, McConnell predicted Congress would eventually pass a clean short-term funding measure.

“The only people talking about a government shutdown are the Democrats and nobody has any interest in doing that, so I think we’ll pass a clean CR [continuing resolution], which would operate the government probably into December,” he told Fox Business Network in an interview.

Senate majority whip John Cornyn (R-Texas) told reporters Monday the Senate would likely take the lead in advancing a spending bill, and not wait for the House.

“I don’t think it’s been finally decided, but to me it becomes increasingly apparent that the Senate is probably going to have to move,” he said.

Under the scenario Cornyn laid out, the Senate will vote on language to defund Planned Parenthood, possibly as part of a broader bill to fund the government.

When that fails because of a Democratic filibuster, the Senate will move to vote on a continuing resolution that does not defund the group.

He told reporters to cancel their weekend plans but later backed off that suggestion.

There's growing pressure on the Senate to move first because the House is out of session until Thursday. Even when it comes back, Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) will be preoccupied with hosting Francis's speech to a joint session of Congress that same day.

Congress must pass a short-term funding measure by Oct. 1 to avoid a shutdown.

Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) accused McConnell of wasting time. He noted the Senate has already voted on a bill to defund Planned Parenthood and that the GOP leader has acknowledged that only a clean stopgap can get signed into law.

"How many times does the Republican leader need to return to this same show vote? We're going to prevent a government shutdown with a clean continuing resolution. That's what he said," Reid said on the floor.

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) said the House will be ready to "act quickly."

"The most important thing is that we keep the government open for business so that we provide stability to our economy and continue vital federal programs on which all Americans rely," he said. "I am pleased that there is forward legislative momentum in the Senate to avoid a government shutdown."

Cochran's bill sticks to the \$1.017 trillion sequestration spending cap for fiscal 2016, which begins next Thursday.

The bill includes \$74.7 billion for overseas contingency operations and \$700 million in emergency funding to fight wildfires. It also extends the expiring authorities of the Internet Tax Freedom Act, the E-Verify program and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Cruz and Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who are both running for

president and trying to appeal to Tea Party voters, said Tuesday they would oppose a clean stopgap.

Cruz asserted that Democrats should get the blame for a government shutdown, an argument he deployed two years ago before federal agencies shuttered for 16 days over a fight on ObamaCare.

“I think we should stand for principle and not capitulate to President Obama,” he said.

He declined to say whether he would hold the floor with a talking filibuster to delay action on the measure.

Paul argued that the federal budget should be broken up and voted on piecemeal, so that controversial items such as funding for Planned Parenthood would require 60 votes to pass.

“I won’t vote for anything that’s got Planned Parenthood money in it and I won’t for a [continuing resolution] because it’s a continuation of the problem,” he said. “I’m not voting for any CR because it’s bad government.”